

REMARKS

The Applicants received two Notices of Allowance and Examiner's Amendments mailed on December 12, 2003 for this case. One of the Notices of Allowance and Examiner's Amendments did not apply for this case. The correct Notice of Allowance and Examiner's Amendment for this case refers to amending claim 5.

During the telephonic Interview of December 11, 2003, it was agreed to amend claims 4 and 5 to include the term "further". The Examiner's Amendment, however, only recites to amending claim 5. Claim 8 has been amended to provide proper antecedent basis for "non-oxidizing". This amendment was discussed in the interview of December 11, 2003. Therefore, the Applicants are amending claims 4 and 8 to be consistent with the amendments discussed during the Interview. Additionally, Applicants are amending claim 9 in order to correct a typographical error.

Accordingly, Applicants believe that the amendments merely embody the correction of formal matters without changing the scope of the claims. Applicants also believe that such amendment is needed for proper protection of the invention and requires no substantial amount of additional work on the part of the Patent Office. Thus, it is respectfully requested to enter the suggested amendments.

It is respectfully requested that this amendment be entered prior to the issuance of the above-referenced patent application. It is believed that no new matter is added by this amendment. If the Examiner desires any additional information, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below to expedite prosecution. Prompt and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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